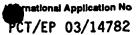
INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT



A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 H01B13/00 H01B13/14 H01B13/26 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC 7 H01B Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT Category ° Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages Relevant to claim No. Α CH 682 778 A (BETA INSTR CO) 1-19 15 November 1993 (1993-11-15) column 1, line 62 -column 4, line 6: figure 1 US 5 926 949 A (GARNER MARK A ET AL) 1-19 A 27 July 1999 (1999-07-27) column 3, line 26 -column 12, line 28; figures 1-7 WO 98/52197 A (CAIMI LUIGI ; BALCONI LUCA (IT); BAREGGI ALBERTO (IT); BELLI SERGIO) A 1-19 19 November 1998 (1998-11-19) claims 1-28; figures 1-5 Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. Patent family members are listed in annex. Special categories of cited documents: *T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance invention "E" earlier document but published on or after the international "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention filing date cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such docucitation or other special reason (as specified) *O* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or ments, such combination being obvious to a person skilled document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed in the art. "&" document member of the same patent family Date of the actual completion of the international search Date of mailing of the international search report 7 June 2004 16/06/2004 Name and mailing address of the ISA Authorized officer European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Demolder, J Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

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